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SUBJECT: AGOA PREPARATIONS MOVE APACE

REFS: (A) NAIROBI 859 AND PREVIOUS

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12. Summary: At the May 7 meeting of the AGOA Main Preparatory Committee, the Government of Kenya (GOK) agreed to our request to separate lunch and the ministerial closing on the final day of the forum. The committee agreed with the recommendation of the Conferencing Sub-committee to close the trade exhibition to the public (including the smaller Jua Kali craft fair) during the forum. Minister of Trade Amos Kimunya has approved the draft invitation for AGOA-eligible countries, and the GOK will send invitations to AGOA-eligible countries this week. The Civil Society Sub-committee presented its program, and the GOK announced that draft programs for all three forum events are now posted on Kenya's AGOA website. The private sector has made significant progress on its program, identifying many of the speakers for its plenaries and breakout sessions. Registration for the private sector event is now open on the AGOA website. In a separate meeting with Ambassador Ranneberger on May 13, Trade Minister Kimunya proposed holding a joint press conference announcing the forum once the official AGOA Forum logo is unveiled. Kimunya also proposed to hold the EAC Investment Conference either one day earlier or later than the AGOA Forum, and requested a taped message from President Obama to play during the forum. End summary.

Programming

¶3. During the May 7 AGOA Forum Main Preparatory Committee meeting, ECON/C requested - and the committee agreed -- to separate lunch and the ministerial closing ceremony on the final day of the forum. During a smaller working meeting May 12, the Conferencing Sub-committee reviewed the three-day program in detail to plan meeting space and effective flow between the various forum events. On August 4, the GOK plans to synchronize times of the private sector, civil society and the African consultative programs in order to facilitate common tea breaks and lunch. The working group confirmed there is adequate space in the Kenyatta International Conference Center (KICC) for three concurrent events. On August 5 and 6, the working group established space for the plenaries and breakout sessions for the US-Africa ministerial.

¶4. ECON/C requested a revised program that identifies sponsors for each social event. The private sector plans to sponsor lunch on August 4 for all three events in the KICC's Tsavo Ballroom with a separate area for VIP participants. The GOK will sponsor tea breaks on August 5 and August 6, and a gala dinner for all participants on the evening of August 5. Kenya's Export Processing Zones Authority (EPZA) will sponsor lunch for all forum participants on August 6. The GOK requested feedback from the interagency team regarding US sponsorship of a social event during the forum.

Public Access

¶5. Econ/C emphasized that we are not comfortable with tenant access to vendors located within the KICC during the forum events. The full committee agreed with the recommendation of the Conferencing Sub-committee to close the trade exhibition to the public (including the smaller Jua Kali craft fair) during all days of the forum. The Chair said that exhibit organizers should ensure that potential exhibitors understand the objectives of the show and that access will be restricted to registered participants of the forum, and he emphasized that he will not interfere with recommendations from the Security Sub-committee.

Private Sector/Civil Society Progress

¶6. The private sector has made significant progress. Working with the USAID Regional Trade and Competitiveness Hubs, it continues to refine its program and source speakers and moderators for plenaries and breakout sessions and has opened up registration for its event. Potential participants are now able to download a registration form and fax it the private sector sub-committee to register for the forum. The trade show event planner reported 118 stands are booked for the exhibit. The Export Promotion Council (EPC) will provide support and training to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) so that they are able to effectively exhibit their export-ready goods at the trade show. EPC is also mobilizing trade show participants through advertising.

GOK Progress

¶7. The GOK has made the following progress on forum preparations:

-- Minister of Trade Amos Kimunya has approved the draft invitation for AGOA-eligible countries, and the GOK reports it will send invitations to AGOA-eligible countries this week.

-- Draft programs for all three events are now available on the Kenya AGOA Forum website.

-- The GOK has finalized the terms of reference for an overall event organizer and the Public Relations sub-committee is moving forward with the selection of the vendor.

-- The Conferencing Sub-committee is working on terms of reference for Xerox, the badging contractor. The registration system will be ready to go live once they receive the final registration forms.

¶18. ECON/C acknowledged the hard work of the Badging and Accreditation sub-committee and emphasized the importance of a detailed written plan for the entire badging and accreditation process. Econ/C reminded the committee that we would like to see a written list of fees associated with all events of the forum and confirmed that we do not know who will be a part of the U.S. delegation (press reports in Kenya have indicated that Secretary of State Clinton has confirmed her participation). In a separate May 13 meeting with Ambassador Ranneberger, Trade Minister Kimunya proposed holding a joint press conference announcing the forum once the official AGOA Forum logo is unveiled. It is not clear when the logo will be chosen; a competition for the logo design closes May 15. Ambassador Ranneberger said that he would like to hold the press conference before the end of May; however, the timing depends on how quickly the final logo design is chosen. During the meeting, Trade Minister Kimunya agreed to hold the EAC Investment Conference either one day earlier or later than the AGOA Forum, and requested a taped message from President Obama to play during the forum.

Ranneberger